

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington 25, D. C.

Tentative

March 2, 1951

RENEWED EMPHASIS IN 1951  
ON GARDENING AND HOME FOOD PRESERVATION

Home gardening and home food preservation are being emphasized with increased vigor in rural and urban areas by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the State land-grant colleges. Although the national food supply is generally adequate for present requirements, it is believed that an orderly and gradual expansion of gardening and food preservation programs now being carried on in all States and Territories would contribute additional material strength to national defense efforts by:

- (1) Providing a better balanced diet for families.
- (2) Benefitting health and morale.
- (3) Stretching family food budgets.

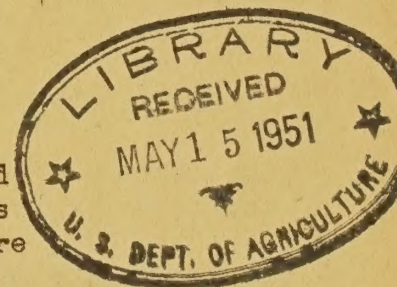
LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

Following the recommendations of an advisory committee on national garden leaders, Secretary Brannan early in February announced the importance of increasing gardening and preservation activities. Leadership responsibility was assigned to the Cooperative Extension Service.

THE GOAL - GROW MORE - PRESERVE MORE - AT HOME

To attain an orderly increase in home food supplies, it will be necessary to:

1. Expand existing garden programs.
2. Strengthen educational work on preserving and utilizing fruits and vegetables, and improving diets.
3. Encourage people without gardens in cities to preserve fruits and vegetables when available in quantity at reasonable prices.
4. Seek cooperation of commercial growers and marketing and consumer information services to encourage non-gardeners to utilize fruits and vegetables when excess supplies are available at low prices to avoid waste.
5. Encourage wide participation in food production and conservation.
6. Encourage the production and preservation of tomatoes, yellow vegetables and green leafy vegetables in view of recent nutritional studies.



Such a program will fortify the health of the Nation by providing nutritious diets, assure an adequate reserve of essential food supplies, add mileage to the family food dollar, relieve bottlenecks of transportation, manpower, and packaging materials by increasing home and community production and conservation of fruits and vegetables.

THE FOOD SITUATION

A near record level of per capita food consumption is indicated for 1951. During 1950 the American people consumed 12 percent more food than during pre-war



1935-39. The level was higher only during 1945-47.

Retail food prices now stand at an all-time high, with further increases expected due to indicated increases in consumer income for 1951. Supplies will be greater, but demand is expected to increase more than the supply. It is clear that there is no immediate danger of food shortages.

#### VEGETABLE SITUATION

Production in 1950 was very near the record high of 1946, with surplus production in some crops, notably onions and cabbage. Per capita consumption is running about 10 percent above pre-war. Anticipated higher prices may result in increased supplies of commercial vegetables. The labor situation is a factor that must be considered in this connection.

The USDA production guides of February 7 call for increasing the commercial acreage of vegetables for processing 22 percent above the 1950 planted acreage figures. Special emphasis is placed on sweet corn and tomatoes for processing, with acreage targets for these crops increased 40 percent and 35 percent respectively, above the 1950 acreage. Recommendations are for 15 percent increase in green peas, 10 percent in snap beans and 5 percent in lima beans. Beets, cabbage for kraut, cucumbers for pickles and spinach acreage recommendations remain the same as in 1950.

Record highs are being established almost every year in both production and consumption of frozen vegetables, with further increases expected for 1951. Canned vegetable consumption hit a record high in 1946 with 46.5 pounds per capita, and in 1950 it was 38 pounds, 28 percent above pre-war.

Increasing consumer demand is expected to encourage larger packs for 1951, but if production is no greater than 1950 prices would increase substantially. If production per person should reach the 1946 record, prices might remain near present levels. Military and export requirements probably will not exceed 10 percent of the total pack.

#### FRUIT SITUATION

Consumption of fresh fruits for two years has been below the 1935-39 average, and it is expected to continue below that average in 1951.

Canned fruits and juices reached an all-time high in 1946, and were somewhat below that level in 1950. New highs are expected in the consumption of frozen fruits in 1951, following the trend of the past few years.

Dried fruit production was low in 1950; may be larger in 1951.

#### DIETARY IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAM

Diets in general in the United States are at a high level, above that at the outset of World War II. This is shown by average per capita studies, as well as by family studies. In 1948 about one-fifth of the diets of city families fell short of recommendations for Vitamin C, about one-seventh short for Vitamin A. Fruits and vegetables are important sources of these essential vitamins.



Fruits and vegetables supply nearly all of the Vitamin C and about two-thirds of the Vitamin A value of our national diet. They furnish about a fifth of the iron and thiamine, nearly a fifth of the niacin, and about an eighth of the calcium and riboflavin. These are the protective foods so vital to good health.

Surveys of the diets of individuals--school children, pregnant women, home-makers, workers, etc.--almost always show a high proportion of the group studied low in intake of tomatoes, leafy green and yellow vegetables. Families raising their own fruits and vegetables tend to eat more of these essential foods.

Forty-four percent of city families covered in a national survey in 1948 reported some home preservation of fruits and vegetables the previous season. Sixty-five percent of non-farm families in 1944 preserved fruits and vegetables. However, city families with gardens in 1944 bought as much fruit and vegetables as families without gardens.

#### AVAILABILITY OF FACILITIES

Facilities for freezing foods have increased greatly since 1944. There were 11,596 locker plants operating in 1950, more than double the 1944 total. Home freezer sales have averaged 35 to 40,000 per month during 1949-50, and it is estimated there are between 2.4 and 3 million in service today.

Community canning centers are available in 27 states. Last year approximately 2,000 steam-operated centers with a capacity of 1,000 to 3,000 No. 3 cans per day were used. More than half of these are located in Southern states. In eight states there were as many or more centers in operation last year than during World War II. Arkansas operated 99, Louisiana 128, and expects to operate 136 this year.

Most of the centers now in operation have improved their facilities to such an extent that they are able to can more produce than during the war, and they turn out a better quality product. Approximately 300 centers have converted facilities to can in glass jars as well as tin cans. Labor-saving equipment such as pea and bean shellers, corn cutters, apple parers, juicers and pulpers have been provided to step up production and improve quality.

#### FERTILIZER SUPPLIES

Estimates indicate the national supply of fertilizers in the fiscal year 1950-51 will provide 22 percent more nitrogen, 16 percent more potash and 6 percent less phosphates. Increases in demand are expected to equal the increases in nitrogen and potash, while an increased demand for phosphates is expected to create a tight situation. In recent years home gardens have used about 2 percent of the national supply of plant food nutrients. For 1951 it is expected that the total quantity of fertilizers in all forms available for home gardens will exceed 1950 totals, but problems will arise with respect to phosphate content of the available supply.

#### PESTICIDE SITUATION

Home gardeners will be wise to plan their insecticide programs around such old favorites as rotenone, cryolite and nicotine. Demand for the newer synthetic compounds such as DDT, BHC, etc., is expected to be much greater, although supplies of these are expected to increase in 1950-51 over 1949-50.



Synthetic fungicides, copper sulphate and sulphur will be available in fair supply, although sulphur for general use is in short supply.

#### SUPPLY OF PLANTING SEEDS

The 1950 production of vegetable seed was somewhat below average carry-over, but adequate supplies for domestic requirements are assured. Imports of seeds were substantial, and total supplies are above pre-war average. Home gardeners should have no difficulty in obtaining sufficient supplies of vegetable seeds for their 1951 requirements.

#### HOME CANNING EQUIPMENT

Steel and aluminum pressure cookers are available. Shortages in steel, aluminum, shipping containers, and packaging materials could bring about the same shortage of pressure cookers that existed during World War II.

To date glass jars have not been in short supply except inventories affected during the chemical industry strikes which delayed production of many raw materials used in glass container manufacture.

Cutbacks in use of rubber has caused difficulty in the closure field. Every effort is being exerted to establish a high essential rating for food production, processing and distribution; but industry and home processors should exert every economy to conserve supplies.

Necessity for conserving tin, aluminum and pulp of all kinds is evident. Although government orders have been designed to enable increasing high levels of food production, home industry may be definitely affected by overall proposed economy of industry in packaging materials.

#### TRANSPORTATION SITUATION

Railroad transportation equipment in use in the United States is inadequate to meet present requirements. Shippers of agricultural products and commodities are more dependent on the motor trucking industry than ever before. Of 8 million trucks, about 38 percent are available for moving agricultural products.

#### ORGANIZATION OF PROGRAM

The 1951 Home Garden and Food Preservation Program will be carried out under the auspices of the State and Federal Cooperative Extension Services in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture.

Secretary Brannan in a letter to Governors of all States, February 27, has called their attention to the program and has suggested the reactivation or establishment of State Garden and Home Preservation Committees to coordinate and mobilize support for State and urban programs.

Millard Caldwell, Federal Civil Defense Administrator, has stated, "The program can make a contribution to Civil Defense in that food thus produced and conserved in the homes will be a safety factor and should strengthen National Defense, and contribute to the health and morale of our citizens."



## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

This program can use support and cooperation of garden clubs, youth groups, women's organizations, service clubs, industrial, community and other civic organizations, churches and all media of public information.

### HOME GARDENS

The greatest need for the program is among individual home gardeners--experienced and inexperienced--and major emphasis is to be placed on inspirational, promotional and educational work at the neighborhood level, under local leaders.

### YOUTH GROUPS

Properly organized gardening of youth agencies can promote physical and mental health, develop desirable traits of character and good citizenship habits, strengthen family ties through projects carried on at home, and bring satisfaction through production of goods of value.

### GARDEN CLUBS

Organized garden clubs can furnish leadership for this program by imparting "know-how" to novice gardeners, and by lending their support to organization of community gardening programs.

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Active sponsorship of a gardening program by civic improvement groups, citizens' associations, church groups, schools and Parent-Teacher associations will be of telling influence on the success of this program. School lunch programs can be strengthened and broadened by collaboration of all concerned.

### PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS

Commercial producers and processors of food products can cooperate with the program by giving advice and counsel in order that any home- or community-canned foods will meet the same standards of safety necessarily set up by commercial producers. The canning industry through its Association will continue to extend cooperation with community- and home-canning activities.

Commercial growers, freezers and canners will be included on local garden committees to assist particularly with the conservation phase of the program.

### HORTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

The National Garden Institute and other horticultural organizations will assist in the program to supplement efforts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and its Cooperative Extension Services.

### INFORMATION

For information regarding the how-to-do-it of gardening and food preservation contact your local county agent or home demonstration agent, usually located at the county court house.

For information as to how groups and organizations can participate contact:

1. Your County Agent, for county-wide organization.
2. Your State Extension Service, for state organization.
3. Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington 25, D.C., for national organization.



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